UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

The Freethinker - *Karl M. Chworowsky*

Humanism Becomes a World Movement - - - - - - - *Edwin H. Wilson*

Adventures in Discussion Groups - - - - - - - - - *Leonard B. Gray*

Should Mothers Stop Working ? - - - - - - - - - *Ethel S. Beer*

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Western Conference News

VOLUME CXXXVIII NUMBER 4

Chicago, November-December, 1952

PRICE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

UNITY

Established 1878

Published Bimonthly
Except During July-August

Subscription $1.50
Single Copies 25 cents

Published by The Abraham Lincoln Centre, 700 Oakwood Blvd., Chicago 15, Ill.
"Entered as Second-Class Matter October 7, 1952, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879."

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THE FIELD

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."

The International Humanist and Ethical Union

Statement of principles and purposes adopted by the First International Congress on Humanism and Ethical Culture, at Amsterdam, Holland, on Tuesday, August 26, 1952, the day on which the International Union was officially established:

This Union is a response to the widespread demand for an alternative to the religions which claim to be based on revelation on the one hand and to totalitarian systems on the other. The alternative offered as a third way out of the present crisis of civilization is Humanism, which is not a new sect, but the outcome of a long tradition that has inspired many of the world's thinkers and creative artists and given rise to science itself. Ethical Humanism unites all those who cannot any longer believe the various creeds and are willing to base their convictions on respect for man as a spiritual and moral being. The fundamentals of modern, ethical Humanism are as follows:

1. It is democratic. It aims at the fullest possible development of every human being. It holds that this is a matter of right. The democratic principle can be applied to all human relationships and is not restricted to matters of government.

2. It seeks to use science creatively, not destructively. It advocates a world-wide application of scientific method to problems of human welfare. Humanists believe that the tremendous problems with which mankind is faced in this age of transition can be solved. Science gives the means, but science itself does not propose ends.

3. It affirms the dignity of man and the right of the individual to the greatest possible freedom of development compatible with the rights of others. There is danger that in seeking to utilize scientific knowledge in a complex society, individual freedom may be threatened by the very impersonal machine that has been created to save it. Ethical Humanism, therefore, rejects totalitarian attempts to perfect the machine in order to obtain immediate gains at the cost of hu-

(*Continued on page 62*)

UNITY

Volume CXXXVIII NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1952 No. 4

EDITORIAL

Out of the American political scene has come another exceptionally high type of political leader. Adlai E. Stevenson can easily be classed with Lincoln, Wilson, and Roosevelt. His clarity of thought and ease of expression, his forthrightness and integrity are of a high order. His seriousness of purpose, his intelligence, and his rare sense of humor rate him as a top figure in the political world. In his campaign speeches he interpreted the American ideal at its highest levels. He had confidence in the intelligence of the voters and he talked to them as mature adults. He dodged no issues and he was frank in the expression of his opinions in all parts of the country. He sees America as a land of opportunity, and he believes in the role of America in world affairs. He made no promises to reduce burdens, and he called on America to rise to new heights of achievement. As Unitarians we can be proud of the spiritual soil from which Adlai E. Stevenson has grown, but he is no sectarian. Jews, Catholics, and Protestants see in him spiritual qualities that raise him above the controversial level. He possesses prophetic qualities that give him a place among the great of all religions. His sense of rectitude enabled him to take attacks with a smile, and his sense of fairness required him to give due credit to his adversary. Here is a man devoted to the common good, a man without personal ambition, and a man who responds to the call of duty. He understands government on the state, national, and international levels, and he is at home among the makers of policy in high places. Adlai E. Stevenson is a man of whom Unitarians can be proud, of whom Americans can be boastful, and in whom democracies throughout the world could have placed their trust. He would have made one of the greatest Presidents in the history of the American Republic.

Curtis W. Reese.

The Freethinker

KARL M. CHWOROWSKY

The Freethinker has always been a much misunderstood and abused individual. Popular opinion has found a variety of convenient labels with which to tag him and an even greater variety of prejudices with which to distort his point of view. He has been called atheist, infidel, unbeliever, scoffer, rebel, radical, and even Communist in our day, and while it is true that these epithets may apply to some isolated Freethinkers it is also true that none of these terms adequately or completely describe all or even most Freethinkers. As a matter of fact, it will be found that a Freethinker is usually as moral, as respectable, as law-abiding, and even as religious a person as any of his other fellow citizens, and he is, generally speaking, probably more intelligent and certainly much more honest and courageous than the majority of his detractors and critics.

The terms Freethinker and Free Thought have suffered from popular superficial usage very much, as have such words as politician, radical, and even artist. Many people use these words recklessly and with connotations that have little basis in fact and experience. For instance, politician has come to mean in popular parlance a person who employs dishonest and corrupt methods to gain and maintain himself in office and generally abuses his privileges of trust and power. Actually, politician simply denotes a person in public affairs, one who may occupy an elective or appointive office and fulfill his duties with as much honesty and efficiency as employed by anyone in private business or in the professions. To use the term politician as synonymous with crook or racketeer is as silly as it is to identify radical with violent revolutionary or Communist, or artist with temperamental instability and promiscuity.

What is a Freethinker and has he a useful place in our society? Addison once said: "Atheist is an old-fashioned word; I am a Freethinker." And when Emerson wrote, "Beware when the great God lets loose a Thinker on this planet!", I believe he meant a Freethinker, for he was just that in the best meaning of that word. "If you make people think they're thinking, they'll love you. If you really make them think, they'll hate you," said Don Marquis, indicating one of the chief reasons for the unpopularity of the Freethinker who not only tries to think for himself but also to make other people think for themselves. Of course, Freethinker denotes much more than a person who happens to hold some so-called anti-theistic or atheistic or irreligious views, and we must bear this in mind when we try to judge the Freethinker fairly. In the original and correct sense of the word, a Freethinker is simply a person who holds that God gave him a head and a mind of his own, as well as a conscience which he should employ as best he can without always first asking: What does society, what does the state, what does the church say?

The Freethinker is one who feels that his first responsibility as regards matters of personal faith and conviction is not to some body of accepted opinions and standardized beliefs but toward his own conscience, even if this means that thereby he isolates himself from the majority of his fellow men and incurs their displeasure and hostility. The Freethinker seeks to remain faithful to his divine heritage as a reasonable and rational creature, one who takes seriously his membership in the category of *homo sapiens* to which anthropology has assigned him. He believes that he can be truly *homo* only as he seeks to become truly *sapiens,* i.e. wise, and he further believes that no one can be truly wise who shares the popular illusion that all wisdom is contained in certain traditional and conventional concepts and systems of philosophy, morals, and religion, and that anyone questioning these is thereby automatically to be labelled an anarchist, an immoral person, or an infidel. The true Freethinker holds that his brain is more than just a knot at the upper end of his spine and that it has a more important function than just to accommodate a hat, and he also believes that his heart was meant to be a source of emotions and loyalties that may discover new objects and experience new ardors. In other words, the Freethinker firmly believes that any working formula of freedom begins with man's privilege to choose in the realm of ideas and loyalties those that appear most acceptable to his reason and most adapted to his needs and experiences.

The Freethinker need not be a member of a Society of Freethinkers or of any other organization any more than a religious person need be a member of any church or established faith. On the contrary, realizing the harm that has been done to truth, to beauty, and to goodness precisely by human attempts to organize and institutionalize them, the Freethinker commonly shies away from, and refuses to join, those groups that boast of established institutions and vaunt their patterns and program of divine authority and ecclesiastical mores. The Freethinker cannot live in an atmosphere where he must stifle his mental and spiritual initiative and conform to the dictates of some pseudo-authority. In short, the Freethinker is one who is convinced that whatever else freedom means it must mean the right to hold opinions, discard traditions and grow mentally, morally, and spiritually without interference from some dictatorship which, for want of more substantial arguments, reaches out to the so-called supernatural to bolster its arrogant presumptions and to defend its preposterous claims to infallibility and special privilege.

Would you not agree that modern society needs the Freethinker, needs the brave, the courageous adventurer into the realms of new thought and novel experience? Would you not agree that we need him in the world of government and public affairs, both national and international, in the world of education, of art and letters, and certainly also in the world of religion and morals? Recent experiences have shown to what degree our society is in need of a thorough and sturdy rethinking of its affairs, especially in the realm of human relations. Certainly, many of the ancient truths have not lost their savor nor have many of our ancient loyalties lost their *raison d'etre;* but it is quite apparent that everywhere new problems need new approaches and new occasions call for new duties. Is it not here that the true Freethinker may become a valuable and powerful ally and that we can well afford to listen to him when he says: "Let us boldly strike out into the open seas of adventurous thinking

and brave action, and in this way meet the tremendous challenge of these days."?

The Freethinker does not ask that we disregard the experiences of the past or throw overboard all traditions that the race has garnered in its long history, but he does ask his fellow men to reëvaluate the thought-patterns of yesterday and to make sure that what we hold as true and abiding in the heritage of the past also proves itself true and pragmatic for the needs of the present. He knows that too close an adherence to the traditions of the founding fathers, too much pious veneration of the heroes of days gone by, may stunt the growth, waste the energies, and vitiate the potentialities of a generation which, as probably no other, finds itself confronted with situations that will not yield to the comfortable and comforting methods and techniques of yesterday but clamor for a mind and a will that are unafraid of new ways and of daring experiments. And let us not be frightened by the fact that there are hypocrites, rascals, and scoundrels among Freethinkers. We have our share of them even in the churches. The important thing to remember is that for every bad Freethinker you have a hundred good ones. A Voltaire, a Thomas Paine, and a Robert Ingersoll, despite all their occasional sallies into bitter satire and harsh denunciation of prevailing views in religion and social morality, still remain authentic voices of Free Thought that we cannot afford to ignore, and their earnest followers who have gone far beyond them in the free quest of the human spirit are abundant proof of the fact that the Freethinker still thinks and is still free in the finest sense of the liberal tradition.

There are many genuine Freethinkers who today are rendering yeoman service in liberating religion from those shackles that threaten to retard its progress at a time when religion might well lead the world in its effort to see justice, peace, and good will established on lasting foundations. The Freethinker's role in religion is identical with that of the religious liberal who believes that of all of man's preoccupations that of his religious self can least afford to become petrified and settled into some ancient mold hallowed by false authorities and buttressed by dogmas and doctrines that have little to commend them aside from the fact that they are old and command a superstitious reverence. If anywhere courageous adventuring into the open seas of search and inquiry is needed, it is in religion, and the Freethinker may well render invaluable service.

We cannot get along without the Freethinker. Let us rid ourselves of the caricature of the Freethinker which for so long we have treasured with so pathetic a stubbornness. If we are to live more richly, more securely, and more responsibly, we will do well to listen to the Freethinker who was never more needed than today, needed to help break the chains that fetter us, to demolish the superstitions that enslave us, and to revitalize and strengthen those insights which, born of freedom, can live and thrive only in an atmosphere of freedom. If there is to be a tomorrow dedicated to universal liberty, the Freethinker will have a share in its creation, and we should not hesitate to grant him his due of credit for helping mankind fulfill its aspirations and realize its most precious dreams. The Freethinker is our brother-in-arms, our comrade, and our loyal ally in the struggle for truth, for Brotherhood, and for the brave new world of our hopes.

Humanism Becomes a World Movement

EDWIN H. WILSON

A new world movement was launched this summer at Amsterdam in Holland. I returned by air from that charming Dutch city where the First International Congress on Humanism and Ethical Culture met. From America came delegations of the American Humanist Association and the American Ethical Union, who were joined there by the English Ethical Union, by the Humanist Association of Holland, and by the Vienna Ethical Society. On the final day of the Congress they and six additional national groups, representing India, Germany, and Belgium, agreed to form the International Humanist and Ethical Union.

Dr. Julian Huxley, President of the Congress, in the opening address spoke for great numbers of people who cannot any longer believe the creeds that are based on claims to supernatural revelation, but who respect man as a spiritual and moral being. There are indeed many people who will share Dr. Huxley's statement that a new faith in man and life is needed. Such people—properly called Humanists—seek to live an ethical and creative life, worthy of their status in the evolutionary scheme. They look to this world here and now, to their existence this side of the grave as the place in which to lead the good life. But most often such people do not have a word for that faith by which they live, nor do they see the need to organize and thus share it with others. That need is to be found in the widespread defeatism of old faiths, in the enticements offered by authoritarians to give up the human enterprise and take flight from responsibility. In behalf of those who are seeking an alternative—on the one hand to totalitarian political systems, and on the other to dogmatic revealed religion—the International Humanist and Ethical Union has been formed. It will seek to rally the forces of this new faith—forces that are already developing spontaneously and separately in many parts of the world.

There were Belgian, French, German, Japanese, Australian, and West Indian members of the Congress, as well as the major delegations from Holland, England, and America. Greetings were read from Humanists in India; from the Chinese Humanist Association (located for the present in Formosa); and from individuals, such as Lord Boyd Orr of Britain. Among the groups sending delegates was *Humanitas,* an organization of Dutch Social Workers which has aims similar to those of the Congress. From France came members of *Les Amis de la Liberte* (The Friends of Liberty) which shared the concern of the Congress for individual freedom combined with democratic social responsibility, but which, because of its religious neutrality and political militancy, properly did not become a founding member of the new Union.

Amsterdam was an ideal place for the meetings. We were given a boat ride over the many picturesque canals of that ancient city. Several of us journeyed to the radio center at Hilversum, to participate in four-language broadcasts. The city of Amsterdam gave the

delegates an official reception at the famous municipal museum, and J. Ray Shute, formerly mayor of Monroe, North Carolina, responded for the Congress to the mayor of Amsterdam as graciously as only an American southern gentleman could. The New York Ethical Society representatives arranged a Sunday meeting similar to those conducted in New York with Dr. Jerome Nathanson giving the inspirational address and with instrumental music furnished by a spirited young Dutch trio. We drove on the same Sunday afternoon to a 16th century castle at Muiden where, by candlelight and with the sails of boats returning from the Zuider Zee visible from the castle windows, we were served a formal dinner in the grand manner and entertained with folk songs of many nations to the accompaniment of an ancient lute. The windmills, the flowers, the avalanches of bicyclists, the friendly and manifestly happy people of Holland gave a charming setting to the Congress.

But we were there for hard work—the formulation of a position, a program, and an organization. For five days the members of the Congress struggled to clarify their views. The usual language barrier, however, was not formidable because the Dutch members all spoke English and most of them spoke French, the other language used at the meetings. More difficult was interpreting phrases which often have different meanings in various languages. For example, "freethinker" in French refers to a militant, anti-religious movement, which the Congress is not; whereas, in some other countries it means "the free mind," or "freedom of thought," which the Congress accepts. The Congress can be characterized as pro-man rather than anti-God; and although most of those present based their faith on naturalism as contrasted with supernaturalism, Humanism is essentially a constructive movement. The final statement of the Congress, a splendid brief summary of conclusions, stated: "On behalf of individual freedom Humanism is undogmatic, imposing no creed on its adherents, thus committing the movement to a program of education free from indoctrination." [This statement is printed in full in The Field, page 50.—*Ed.*]

The main task of this first international meeting was to clarify our intellectual position, but the Congress was not merely theoretical. A resolution was passed endorsing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of Unesco and calling for Humanists to aid its implementation. It was voted to make efforts to secure ratification by all nations of the United Nations' Genocide Convention. The Genocide Convention seeks to prevent such horrors as the mass extermination of a whole people—as was attempted by the Nazis at Dachau, Buchenwald, and Belden. Greetings were sent to the World Congress on Mental Health, then meeting at Brussels, and to the World Congress on Planned Parenthood, to be held this autumn in Bombay, India.

The main lines of the new world organization were set forth in a certificate of incorporation and by-laws. Curiously, the most spirited debate of the Congress came in opposition to incorporation in New York State. We were given an example of the extreme sensitiveness of the smaller nations to anything that looks like domination by the larger powers and especially America. The delegates voted to go through with the filing of incorporation papers in New York State only after it became clear to them that from the beginning it was intended to place the working office of the Union in Europe.

On one afternoon I found myself amid a circle of students from several nations—students of law, medicine, political science, engineering—who expressed their hope that they might correspond with Humanists from universities in other countries and have a student Humanist branch of the international student movement.

The concluding statement of the Congress was the result of three full days of study that had been carefully planned. Some twenty Humanist and Ethical scholars from various countries had prepared papers which, printed in advance, formed the basis of discussion. A portion of the papers were reviewed each day (at plenary sessions) and then the Congress broke up into six discussion groups so that each individual might have his say. On the basis of the reports of these sections the final draft was formulated.

The nature of the papers can be quickly indicated. The English author, Barbara Wooten, for example, showed in her paper that the basis for Humanist morality is to be found in man's biological needs and that democracy does not necessarily rest on theology. Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs, Chicago psychiatrist, similarly held that Humanism derives its meaning and ethics from belief in man and man's potentialities. "There are laws," stated Dr. Dreikurs, "which govern the universe and life. . . The laws can and must be discovered through scientific research in order that man can utilize them for his own benefit." Said one American scientist in the discussion: "It is often said science has nothing to say about values. But even so vague a thing as happiness is a proper subject for research." Dr. J. Bronowski, Director of Research for the British coal industry, showed that science is a unifying force among men because its language and results are universal. Science, moreover, he held, is essentially truthful and employs imagination, a quality much needed for the discovery of answers to the great world problems.

The idea that science need not destroy, but that, guided by wisdom and good will, it can solve human problems for the benefit of all, seemed a somewhat new idea to the continental Humanists, especially to the Dutch for whom Humanism has meant rather the transmission of personal inspiration from the past.

Professor Horace Friess of Columbia University spoke of the needs of a wider humanity, defining the conditions under which persons of various cultures can learn to work together. Dean Curtis Reese of Chicago pointed out that organized Humanism, although non-sectarian and politically neutral, must be concerned with all things human and that, therefore, it cannot sidestep economic and political problems. Dr. Gerhard von Frankenberg, President of the German Federation of the Free Spirit, showed that the liberal Humanism of Goethe did not die under the heel of the Nazis, and that European Humanists today can look forward. From India came a paper from M. N. Roy, who planned to come to Amsterdam but who broke a leg on a mountain climb not long before his scheduled departure. Dr. Roy based the morality of a naturalistic Humanist on man's reason. This Humanist from India has elsewhere pointed to the village producer's and consumer's cooperative as an answer to the needs of India's hungry millions.

On the basis of these papers and the full participa-

tion of the members of the Congress, a brief, clear statement of the principles and purposes was developed. The statement does not include a panacea for the world's ills. It does include a spirit of courage; it is an answer to man's worst evil today: *fear*. It is forward looking, confident, affirming the potential competence and dignity of man to do what must be done to establish a peaceful and decent world. It reveals that Humanism is a way of life calling for the personal cultivation of ethical living. It offers a faith wide enough to unite men and women of many backgrounds and many nations.

One American writer who attended the Congress put into a few words the premises of the American Humanists. They reflect the philosophy of that great American Humanist, the late John Dewey; they express confidence in the effectiveness of research as an instrument to meet the great challenges of ignorance, overpopulation, hunger and prejudice. Here they are:

> Humanism is a faith in man.
>
> Humanism is a faith in the inherent worth and dignity of every human being.
>
> Humanism is a faith in democracy as the best assurance to every person of the essential human rights and of access to the maximum fulfillment of his material, intellectual, and spiritual needs.
>
> Humanism is a faith in science as reliable knowledge of the universe in which we live.
>
> Humanism is a faith in research as the means to achieve understanding of the unknown, including human nature and the laws of social behavior.
>
> Humanism is a faith in the ability of men of good will, with the aid of research and in a democratic world, to develop ideals and to create a motivation that will unite mankind in pursuit of these ideals.

Such a faith is one that is concerned only with life on this earth, but which insists that the life of every son of man should reach its greatest possible fulfillment.

The International Humanist and Ethical Union has issued a call to groups and individuals who share such a faith to associate themselves in this new world movement for the advancement of man. This faith is, in practice, the working conviction of hundreds of thousands of high-minded, devoted men and women. It is vitally important both for intellectual progress and for international understanding — important consequently for establishing world peace—that there be such an organization, and that those in sympathy with it become members of one of the national groups that form the Union. So we say, in the spirit of Walt Whitman, "Whoever you are, come journey with us. . . ."

Adventures in Discussion Groups

LEONARD B. GRAY

The Great Books Groups are flourishing a little better than reasonably well in our country. As far as I know, and for reasons I do not know, these discussion groups are more numerous and larger in the West than in the East, especially New England. Throughout the country, I believe that they have an average attendance of about fifteen persons.

The books considered by these groups are the great classics selected by the central committee of the Great Books Movement. Each member of each group is required to buy and to study the books. Each group has two leaders who are urgently requested not to lecture on the books nor to express an opinion in discussion, but to confine themselves to asking pertinent questions about the book under consideration with the purpose of inciting the other members to discuss. A leader talking too much has killed many a group, I understand. A college professor, usually better informed about the books on the schedule than a workingman and more given to expressing opinions than the latter, has often proved, I am told, the less effective leader of the two. The members of these groups are college and university professors, school teachers, college and high school students, professional people, industrial leaders, big business men, society women, small storekeepers, engineers, office secretaries, clerks, farmers, garage mechanics, unskilled laborers, housewives, and people of most other jobs and walks of life, but persons of average income and with little formal education predominate in numbers.

Not a few of the group-discussions are dull, uninteresting, and pointless—due chiefly, I suppose, to poor leadership and to little study on the part of the members, but the majority are quite stimulating, vital, and highly rewarding. They are inciting a huge amount of study and independent thinking, especially on the part of people who but for these groups would do very little serious reading and thinking. Many a person has testified that his attendance at a group opened up an entirely new world to him and started him on a new life. This statement, by Henry Thoreau, "How many a man has dated a new era in his life from the reading of a book," has been particularly true among the members of these groups. The study of the classics which, on the whole, contain the greatest wealth of thought and insight into human nature has been greatly increased, especially among the people who never went to college, by the Great Books movement. While these groups are perhaps a little too rigid for my taste, I recognize and highly commend the great educational and democratic values in them. They supply strong evidence of something sound and encouraging in our American life in that they reveal the fact that many people amid the increasing number of attractive calls—especially that of television—for their attention and time are eager to discuss the deep and eternal problems of life and are capable of sustained thoughtful attention.

While I appreciate the worth of the Great Books Groups and see that the methods of conducting them are better for some types of mind than the methods I prefer, more to my liking are two discussion groups I have been connected with, one for ten years in Lynn and the other for this last year here in East Douglas, on account of the freer method of conducting and the more informal atmosphere. These two groups, quite similar to each other, have a broader field of study than the Great Books Groups.

For two years in the Lynn group when we considered "The Great Religions of Mankind" and "The Great Problems of Philosophy" there were threads of unity in the subjects, but for the other nine years in these two groups the books and subjects were entirely unrelated to one another in order of consideration. We have abruptly turned from philosophy to science or poetry or fiction or history or bible study, and I am not sure that it is wise to do this. The average

attendance for eleven years in these two groups has been over 20, and in our East Douglas group this last year (its first year) it was 26¾.

Each of these two groups is called "The Fireside Group" and this name and a fireplace in a private home increase the informality and lack of set pattern that little organization and no overhead authority naturally give. Each group has but one leader who uses various methods of conducting the meetings. He is free to lecture, to express opinions, to ask questions, and to argue whenever he likes. He usually lectures much less than half the time and his little lecturing is constantly interrupted by his own questions and by questions and comments from the other people present. He encourages the attendants to interrupt him, to offer information, to agree and disagree with him and with others any time they like. This leads to a very frank expression of opinion, at times extreme and violent, which occasionally incites anger and ill feelings, but on the whole leaves a better mood in the group when the meeting is over than would suppression of opinion. Indeed, the leader makes much effort to make everyone feel important and perfectly at home and to acquire the feeling that no one can speak "out of turn." This develops in the group a feeling that saying untrue and silly things has a value in inciting discussion and in finding truth, that the wrong thing can be the right thing in that it throws up a contrast to the best and incites a more heated defense of the best and thus helps to find what we like to think is the collective wisdom of the group. One night after the meeting a man telephoned the leader and said that he was afraid he spoke "out of turn." "No, you didn't," said the leader, "but I wish you would now and then."

The members of these groups, except a few who are asked to prepare special papers now and then, are not urged or expected to do any reading of the books on the schedule which is presented at the last meeting of the previous season or at the beginning of the season.

Freedom from a set pattern for discussion and a variety of methods in conducting the meetings do much to incite interest on the part of the attendants. Occasionally the leader asks a person to make note of the points made in a discussion and to report his findings at the next meeting. Occasionally he asks another member to conduct the meeting. Once he asked a person outside his group to review *The Mature Mind* by Overstreet and to lead the discussion for that evening. A few exceptions are made to the general policy of asking for no previous study when the leader asks a member to prepare a short paper on the book to be discussed or on the author of the book, or on some related subject. The leader does this both to throw various lights on the subject and to encourage people to make distinctive literary contributions which in some cases, I think, are worthy of publication in leading magazines. He also makes it known that ideas and bits of information from books and magazines, or from any other source, would be greatly appreciated and to almost every meeting clippings and ideas that the members picked up in various places and ways are brought, sometimes about subjects discussed in the group several weeks before. In these ways we keep up a continual flashing of many lights.

The meetings of these two groups are intensely human and exciting, not a touch of the stuffy or high-brow about them. They are full of serious talk, vigorous argument, free play of ideas, good will, wit, humor, and laughter. One night a woman passing the house in which one of these groups was holding a meeting said that she heard so much excited talk and laughter that she thought the house was shaking to pieces. The fact that the group in Lynn has gone on just as enthusiastically after its founder and leader left shows that it had been built chiefly on a fellowship and on an eagerness to discuss and to learn.

It has been very interesting and significant to observe the wide variety of types of people who have been and are in these two groups. Some persons do not know what it is all about and are bored stiff except when their bewilderment fascinates them. Most of these people never appear a second time, glad to escape what they apparently think to be a pestilence. Some come chiefly to serve refreshments, others merely because they like the leader or some other member. Some enthusiasts cool off suddenly for no apparent reasons and others get angry at some book or remark and all the king's horses and all the king's men could not drag them back again. Some people who seldom, or never, speak a word in discussion listen attentively and say that they get a lot, and a few of these silent persons read all summer the books scheduled for the next year, while others who do not like to "speak in meeting" prepare papers and read them before the groups when asked to do so.

The large freedom of speech we give has its drawback in that it encourages and tolerantly suffers the over-talkative who hog the discussion, bore all others, and present a problem for the leader. The best contributors to the discussions are those who talk a reasonable amount, and they are fortunately the majority. We generally have a few who are ever eager to put over their favorite beliefs. For a few years, no matter what the subject was, one woman would frequently and suddenly break the thread of discussion by saying, "I believe in miracles," and another woman would invariably add, "Me, too." The natural and worthy love for importance which we always encourage is occasionally carried to the extreme by persons reading a prepared paper for the whole discussion period (approximately two hours) and thereby boring the group, which finds uninterrupted lecturing or reading almost unendurable. But the majority play ball with good sportsmanship and strive for the best interests of the groups more than for the satisfaction of their egos. A few have attended the group in Lynn regularly for eleven years and have testified that it has been one of the best things that ever came into their lives. One woman, after attending several meetings, said, "I have been looking for this sort of thing for years."

Both Fireside Groups were founded in Congregational churches and most of the "Firesiders," as we like to call them, have been and are members of these two churches, and yet not a few have come from various other churches and denominations. One of the best members is a Roman Catholic. A few are non-churchgoers. The attendants are of various intellectual and educational levels, and they range in age from fifteen to ninety-five. The majority are not college graduates and their contributions are not inferior to those of the few college graduates who attend and contribute a great deal.

Conveners help to strengthen the fellowships in these groups and to keep up attendance by reminding the members (or rather attendants, I should say,

for there are no membership rules, nor fees, nor obligations) when they are absent that they are missed. Many people have attended many times, many infrequently, not a few only a few times, and some only once. While many of the approximately one hundred and eighty persons, who have attended these two groups in the eleven years, have come and gone, each group each season has had a fairly regular, substantial, and closely-knit core of people.

And what a variety of tastes among the various types of mind that have appeared in these two groups! I learned as I had never learned before that what is meat for one person is poison for another and vice versa. One woman scolded the leader when he did not have a Biblical subject, while another said that it would not do to confine ourselves to the Bible or to religious books of any sort. *Human Destiny* by Lecomte du Noüy was exceptionally well-liked by all the members of one group except one lady who said that she could hardly wait until we got through with this book. This same woman liked our discussion of the life and writings of Tolstoi better than anything else on the schedule one season while another said that this subject was the only one she did not like. The latter could not stomach the mentioning of Tolstoi's early immoralities and berated the leader for referring to the "bad things," to use her phrase, about the young Russian who became one of the great novelists and saints of history. We had another example of this sickening squeamishness in a man who squirmed at a frank consideration of George Eliot's irregular marriage and told the leader that he should skip such things. But this sort of thing was by no means typical of this group, most of whose attendants on that occasion cried out for a realistic facing of everything we could dig up about an author or a book. Efforts were made a few times by two or three members of one group to get Dale Carnegie's books, current events, and popular speakers on the schedule but each time the majority rose up in arms against these efforts. Most people in one group greatly liked *Peace of Mind* by Rabbi Liebman, and when a woman claimed that this book was not Christian and brought in something by a fundamentalist to counteract it, one man vehemently claimed that this best seller contained the spirit and gist of our Christian religion even though the author did not use our Christian phraseology and traditional thought-patterns. One woman was glad when we left Emerson's *Self-Reliance* and said that instead of such stuff as we usually discussed we ought to consider such things as an article on flying saucers in *Life* Magazine. A usually congenial and mild-mannered Methodist minister who loves Emerson's writings angrily said that *The Nature of the Universe,* by Fred Hoyle, made him dizzy, that he could not stand any more of it and that he did not see the slightest value in all the facts in the book about stars and planets. This poison for this minister, however, was meat for a high school boy, a Harvard graduate, and an ex-merchant who were simply enthralled by this book and claimed that it was the best thing on our course of studies this last year. This same season *Middlemarch* incited more discussion and delight than anything else on the schedule but the Harvard man just mentioned skipped the two meetings at which we took up this novel because, as he put it, everything by George Eliot nauseated him. The year before last, in the other group—the one in Lynn—this same novel had delighted one woman who went out to the kitchen the night we discussed Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* which, for another woman, who had never been to college, opened the skies to a new and wonderful thought-world and became for her the crowning glory of all the studies that group had taken up.

But we rejoice that most of the widely different tastes and opinions among the people who attended the two groups were essentially sound and healthy. They were evidences that we were succeeding in our efforts to develop individuality and not conformity, to get people to make individual choices, to find what appeals to them most and to be loyal to it. It has been encouraging to have learned that while there were some tastes for secondary and trivial books, most of the attendants preferred the great books and that most of the sharp differences in opinions were in the areas of the latter books. Despite a few dissenting voices the members of both groups, almost on their own and without much urging from their leaders, stoutly determined to stick for the most part to the great books of the ages and to the eternal problems of man. This was the one great thing most attendants had in common despite, or maybe I should say amid, their wide differences in types of mind, tastes, and opinions. Large-minded attitude, delightful fellowship, independent thinking, and creative work were dominant in our groups. These characteristics were developed not only by the fine spirit we maintain for the most part in our discussions, but also by Christmas-Literary parties, by annual outings in May to some literary and religious centers, by short social times with refreshments at the close of the discussions, and by encouraging the attendants at the groups to do creative writing. For our Christmas parties all were asked to tie poems to the gifts they brought and many of these poems on the leader's suggestion were written by the members themselves. The opening paragraph of *The Magic Mountain,* by Thomas Mann, deals with time and this started people writing their own definitions of time which kept coming in for several weeks. One group cannot take credit for several of its members getting their writings, including a fine volume of poems, published, for they would have done so anyway, but we do know that in this group these writers were greatly encouraged to continue writing and to do better work, and that in addition others were inspired to write some fine things. In fact, in both groups considerable creative writing was done, due to the encouragement the writers received from their fellow members.

These two mixtures of many ages, abilities, temperaments, and tastes have given me and not a few other people the most thrilling and valuable adventures in education we have ever experienced. Such groups are among the best encouragers and promoters of information, free inquiry, independent thinking, tolerance, and democratic living, I believe, in our American life.

I give a general description of the Great Books Groups and a more intimate description of the two groups with which I have been connected, not chiefly because I am proud of them, although I am surely proud of them, nor because I think that they are the best, but rather because my dominant desire is to encourage my readers to join or to start even better groups with the same spirit and the same purpose that are in these little fellowships of eager minds.

Should Mothers Stop Working?

ETHEL S. BEER

The telephone rang in a New York City Day Nursery. At the end of the wire a woman asked: "Have you a list of women who board babies?"

At my request for further information she continued:

"I'm a war-widow with a baby under a year. I have to go to work. So I must find a place to leave her. Right now she's in the country. But that's too far for me to go except week ends. Maybe you know someone to help out until I find an apartment and a maid."

Here was the old familiar story—a mother who had to have her child looked after while she worked. However, she could afford a private arrangement, so did not have to rely on a Day Nursery—the proverbial refuge for the children of working mothers. In this she was fortunate, since comparatively few Day Nurseries take babies any more.

Today the group of working mothers, war-widows, and others is causing concern. The problem is complicated by the pressure for preschool education, which has confused the respective roles of the Day Nursery and the Nursery School. Besides, the fact that there are so many working mothers has social implications.

To bring up the crucial question: Should mothers stop working outside the home because their absence menaces the welfare of their children? The assumption is that only work separates mothers and children. What about mothers of means, who employ nurses and governesses? Except for the economic problem, then, the plight of the children of working mothers is a part of the larger problem, the bringing up of *all* children. Hence more realistic thinking and a more logical approach is essential than has been shown up to now.

Everybody seems to have an opinion about working mothers. Only recently a taximan taking me to a Day Nursery remarked scornfully:

"I know a couple out where I live that have a store. And they send their child to one of these here places."

"What would you have them do?" I asked.

"Why the mother should stay at home, of course," he replied.

Perhaps he is right, I thought to myself. Then the practical aspect of the case obtruded. The wife helped in the store because a paid assistant cost too much. Hence the child was better off in a Day Nursery than left to the divided attention of her busy mother.

Ideal as it may be for *all* mothers to take care of their own children, other factors are involved. Mrs. Cole was a teacher. Then she made a brilliant marriage and retired ostensibly for good. But a few years later her husband became ill and subsequently died. During this time the money they had was spent, so Mrs. Cole was left stranded with a small daughter. Therefore she returned to teaching. Luckily she did well in her old profession, for as the child approached adolescence she developed a serious ailment, demanding constant and expensive medication.

Social workers do not agree about mothers working. One theory can be summed up as follows: "It's better to pay the mother directly and let her take care of her own child. Besides, it's cheaper than supporting the present approved Day Nursery with its threefold program of health, education, and case work."

Naturally this view appeals to the public, whose money is being spent. Only does the comparison allow for the expenses of a relief setup, not to mention Nursery education for the children?

Other social workers say: "Why shouldn't a mother take a job if her children are properly cared for? In a Day Nursery these children have advantages that they might not have otherwise."

This argument has considerable force since relatively few Nursery Schools exist for the lower income group. And some kindergartens function only between one to three o'clock in the afternoon, inconvenient hours to say the least.

The difficulty is that the matter has not been delved into deeply enough. The complications in the situation are the economic circumstances in certain families, the confusion between the Day Nursery and the Nursery School, and the inconsistent attitude about mothers looking after their own children.

Financial considerations cause many mothers to work. The Hirshes were refugees from Austria, arriving in the United States in the late 1930s. The father, an electrician, apparently could not find a steady job. Much as she disliked it, the mother had to supplement his earnings and leave the children—two small girls—in a Day Nursery.

On the other hand, Mrs. White could have lived on her husband's salary. She worked for what she considered higher standards of living. Her position in an office allowed her to have a maid for the home and the baby, as well as a nicer apartment than she could have had otherwise. Whether her premises were justified or not is a matter of opinion.

Of course some mothers are eligible for relief provided they will accept it. Only, as a rule, they can earn more. Besides, many prefer to be independent—an attitude that hardly seems blameworthy.

I remember a mother who had been on relief for years. Since it was during the depression, she was not really at fault. Yet her face wore a hangdog expression. The husband, who had deserted her and their three children, was supposed to contribute to their support but rarely did. This made the mother all the more glum. One day I asked her whether she would like a job.

"Could *I* work?" she asked unbelievingly.

Once employed, she was a changed woman. Her very bearing showed pride.

Mothers feel humiliated when they must take help, even though it may be only temporarily.

"I've been waiting for a year to put him in here," said a mother whose two-year-old had just been accepted by a Day Nursery.

"And what did you do meanwhile?" I asked.

"Oh, I had to go on relief," she replied, "and did I hate it!"

Not all families with working mothers can get aid, anyhow. Yet with the present high prices, the father's income cannot always be stretched far enough.

"It costs so much to live these days. I just can't stop working," the mother of two growing girls explains. This family lives in a small apartment in an old walk-up tenement, located in a poor district. The

father—an unassuming man of Scotch-Irish descent—is a chef; the mother—short and slight, with a twinkle in her eyes—is a waitress. The two have different shifts, so their daughters are not neglected.

In families living close to the margin, extra expenses always are a drain on the budget. Doctor's bills take their toll, even when no prolonged illness occurs. I know a working mother now, with three children below high school age, faced with over $100 worth of dental repair.

Ambition for their children stimulates many working mothers.

"I want my kids, they should have it better than I have," says a factory working mother, born and brought up in sunny Sicily. Today she labors for the future as well as the present, basting sleeves on men's coats because the earnings of her husband—a barber—do not reach far enough. And judging by the healthy well-nourished look of their children, food alone is a considerable item.

Responsibilities outside the immediate household, such as old parents to support and bringing over relatives from Europe, are other reasons for mothers working.

Some wives help their husbands in business because it is practical. When such parents can bring up their children successfully, more power to them.

Mr. and Mrs. Berger jointly own and run a factory, for which they saved in the early years of their marriage. Yet they have also reared two fine boys, the one in college today, the other in prep school.

The career mother includes the professionals, such as teachers, nurses, social workers, doctors, and so forth. In regard to these, altruism cannot be discounted as a motive. Nevertheless, the same separation of the mother and the child exists. Nor can the attraction of extra money always be denied.

"It's hard to live on one salary, when you're used to two," is the apt way that the sister of a teacher puts it.

Rather more crude was the explanation given by the small daughter of a woman physician—a devoted wife and the mother of four.

"I know why you're a doctor, Mummy. It's because you hate dishwashing."

But apart from economic reasons, the confusion between the Day Nursery and the Nursery School encourages the employment of mothers.

"I feel as though I should go back to work," claims Mrs. Brown. "Cynthia was so much better off in *school* than with me."

Why should she not reason thus when the Day Nursery is called a school, and the benefits of Nursery education are constantly drilled into her head?

Today the terms Day Nursery and Nursery School are used more or less interchangeably. Both are known as Day Care, which is hard to understand, since the Day Nursery is a social agency dealing with a special group, while the Nursery School provides preschool education to all children. Due to the present mixup, the Day Nursery does not help working mothers sufficiently.

"It's getting harder and harder for us," says a young and frail mother, whose husband is in prison, while she struggles to bring up their little daughter.

By trying to copy the Nursery School, the Day Nursery is failing in its purpose. Keeping children only during the preschool years is not enough for working mothers. Not all can wait until the child is two or three years old before returning to work, desirable as this may be. Nor can school children be expected to fend for themselves in their free time.

The time the Day Nursery is open presents another problem. A short day may be preferable but it is not practical for the children of working mothers. In such cases a child may have to go home with a boy or girl hardly older, or a tired and often cranky grandparent. The situation may be even worse in the morning. A four-year-old had to wait three quarters of an hour on the doorstep until the Day Nursery opened. Besides, the long day is essential as the mothers work on different shifts. So some children need the Day Nursery early, others late. It seems almost superfluous to add that a Day Nursery should not follow the school year as mothers are employed at all seasons and have few holidays.

In their efforts to be like the Nursery School, Day Nurseries do not center around the children of working mothers, as they must to be of maximum value. Laudable as it is for the Day Nursery to raise standards, this cannot be done at the expense of the children for whom it was meant. These children do not differ from others fundamentally. But their circumstances do. The Day Nursery can serve best by evolving its own pattern and training its own personnel to focus attention on the children of working mothers.

However, there is a great deal of inconsistency about mothers taking care of their own children. Perhaps Neal B. de Nood, a sociologist of Smith College, put his finger on a vital factor. Speaking on "Disintegrating Forces of Family Life," he pointed out that often the woman commanding a large pay check receives more respect than the simple housewife and mother. Or is this a new angle to an old theme? Judging from the way children of means have been turned over to domestics, the status of motherhood always has been low. Besides, it is the poor working mother who receives criticism, often even from the professional working mother who does not take care of her children either. Education—so much stressed for teachers today, particularly at the preschool level—is sometimes said to unfit mothers for handling their own children. Be that as it may, a mother forsaking a career or giving up a social life because of her children frequently is pitied.

"It's hard for her to be so tied down," bemoan sympathetic relatives and friends, as though looking after her children was a real catastrophe.

The pity is that while more mothers of leisure are caring for their own children, the cause may be lack of money not desire. Mothers have pat excuses to avoid this responsibility. An interesting job makes this one a better companion, when she *is* with her children; another must be fresh for her husband at night. But are fathers just playmates, not partners in parenthood? Besides, why take it for granted that children are a chore? The whole point of view about mothers and fathers, too, must be changed before anything can be done about working mothers. Therefore, the following suggestions are made to all those wishing to better the lot of children, either because of professional or personal interest.

Provide adequate allowances for mothers eligible and willing to accept such assistance. Whether the funds are Federal, state, local, or combined, is a practical matter that cannot be solved here. Private philan-

thropy may also have to be tapped. The main thing is that no stigma should be attached to such help. Then mothers might be more amenable to staying at home, particularly if their children received Nursery education, and the status of motherhood was raised. Preventing mothers from working by force is not desirable because it breeds resentment, likely to react on the child and leave a scar for life.

Provide enough Day Nurseries and Nursery Schools so that each can fulfill its own function. The Day Nursery permits working mothers to keep their children instead of sending them to an orphanage or a foster home. But it must take babies, preschool, and school children, giving a satisfactory program to all ages. Health care is particularly important for the young child. The working mother has little time for such attention, except when the children are sick. Therefore, the Day Nursery should be responsible for routine measures, medical, dental, eye, and psychological, as well as referring the children for special conditions, including the psychiatric. Preschool education compatible with the long day and after-school recreation are essential. The baby needs a great deal of physical care and affection. Lastly, social service should be broader than case work, serving the whole family, doing follow-up, and lending a helping hand in the neighborhood. Above all the Day Nursery should be reserved for the children of working mothers with few if any exceptions. As the Nursery School expands, this should be more possible. Then children just needing preschool education will have a place to go. The Nursery School should induce more mothers to take care of their children willingly because it gives them a break in the day. For certain children the Nursery School of a few hours is better than the longer session, and since this is less expensive should reach larger numbers.

Encourage *all* mothers to care for their own children. As a rule they follow the pattern of their family and social set. So it is important to convince the public, too. Education should rally to the support of mothers, raising their status by every available means. Nobody can replace a devoted mother, although others can give the same amount of individual attention. Sharing with the child its day-by-day activities does a great deal to build up family ties. Primarily this is the mother's function, although the father should join in when he can. Raising children—guiding their lives—is creative, notwithstanding the unaesthetic details. Parenthood is a continuous process, not just a biological experience. Preparation for parenthood is needed by everybody, starting in the primary grades in school.

To stress the value of *every* mother caring for her children is more logical than *carping about the working mother*. From years of watching boys and girls grow up, I know that it is as absurd to say that children of working mothers never turn out well as that all others do. Nevertheless, separation of mother and child can cause hardship. Presumably if the mother's role were more dignified, it would be cast off less easily. Volition is as vital as performance. The world of tomorrow depends on the children of today. Therefore mothers have a grave responsibility, from which they should not deflect so much energy that they fail.

The Vital Faith of Humanism

JOHN H. HERSHEY

The Cosmos

The cosmos is the total system and energy of the universe.

It has four main ascending levels:

1. The non-living (inorganic) level of chemical elements, earth, planets, stars, galaxies. The basis is the atom.
2. The living (organic) level of plants, animals, and man. The basis is the cell.
3. The mental level of animals and man. Basis: The brain.
4. The spiritual level of ideals of truth, beauty, goodness in man and the social order. Basis: The human person.

Each of the upper levels depends on the lower levels. But also each higher level is a new development.

The cosmos is alive in plants, animals, and man. It is mental in animals and man. It is spiritual in and through man.

Humanism has faith that the cosmos itself is the productive power, the creative energy, which brings higher levels of beings and activities into existence.

The Individual

A child is born neither moral nor sinful, but with capacities for growing into a good, bad, or indifferent individual.

Right rearing and education makes for the growth or persons who can rule their lives by spiritual ideals.

An individual can continue to influence coming generations, even after his death, by leaving behind some worthy achievement.

Humanism thus possesses faith in the wonderful possibility for good in each new-born child.

The Social Order

The social order includes families, cities, schools, nations, industries, labor unions, international organizations.

Our goal is a social order making for the material, moral, and cultural well-being of man.

Democracy is the method by which an individual takes part in the various social groups to which he belongs.

Civil liberties, separation of church and state, and racial equality should be favored.

All forms of totalitarianism ought to be opposed.

Aggressive warfare ought to be met by non-aggressive nations cooperating for defense.

The guiding star is the ideal of a cooperative world.

Humanism has faith that man can make great advance toward a much better social order by relying on his own creative effort.

In general, humanism is a living faith that the cosmos itself is capable of producing life, beauty, mind, and man.

It is a vital faith in great possibilities in each child.

It is an active faith that we ourselves can create a brighter world on earth

The Study Table

A Jewish "Who's Who" and Why

THE HEBREW IMPACT ON WESTERN CIVILIZATION. *Edited by Dagobert D. Runes. New York: Philosophical Library. 922 pp. $10.00.*

An encyclopedic reference work by seventeen Jewish scholars cataloguing the influence of Hebrew Culture upon the modern world. Stressed are the contributions in the sciences and the arts (including the cinema and journalism) with social sciences receiving special note. Surprise chapters are those on the Exploration of the Globe and upon military exploits.

Significantly left out is a section on marketing, business and industry, which many non-Jews have been led to believe as being synonymous with Jewish interest and acumen.

Anti-Semites would have an impossible task explaining away the contents. Jews themselves are not too likely to accept this frankly admitted propaganda in their favor, but would rather be evaluated simply as people.

Christians should note that Jesus (Jeshu ben Joseph) is frankly claimed as the greatest of the Jewish prophets. He is mentioned in the index with seventeen references, whereas there are but eight for Georg Brandes (Morris Cohen) whose popular book in the Thirties promulgated the thesis that Jesus was a myth, like William Tell.

There is no recognition in the book of the debt of Jewry to the Christian monastery, which kept intact during the Dark Ages not only the Jewish literature in the New Testament, but in the Old Testament as well.

Modern contributions are not only in the well-known fields of theater and music, but in psychiatry and nuclear fission. There is a record of the forerunners of Sigmund Freud and those who came after; and forerunners of the atom bomb and those who followed—Bohr (half-Jew), Frisch, Meitner, Einstein, Lilienthal, and Baruch.

One explanation of the book, as given by the editor in the Introduction, is to point up the enormity of the Hitler crime against Jewry, and hence against humanity. He would be willing to forget it all, but finds that it is boldly kept alive in the "black hearts" of Hitler's erstwhile followers. Runes even finds that the Christian nations of the Western World, beneficiaries of the discoveries and creativity of the Jew, "speak to the Teutons as if they were humans."

We have here the admission that Western Civilization in spite of its gains, and from whatever source they come, has failed in the primary factor of humanitarianism. If necessary, Jews may be killed, however important their contribution to culture; Chinese may be slaughtered, however ancient their civilization. In this sense, the book is a warning to all of us.

HAROLD P. MARLEY.

Reason and Religion

We think that much which is called piety is worthless. If religion be the shipwreck of understanding, we cannot keep too far from it. We cannot sacrifice our reason to the reputation of zeal.

—*William Ellery Channing.*

In this work, **EARL MORSE WILBUR,** the acknowledged authority on Unitarian history, traces the dramatic development of the movement through three centuries and a half of almost constant persecution, down to the present day.

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Correspondence

Weston Defends Schug

To UNITY:

I am surprised that Mr. Schug's comments were not obtained and printed with Mr. Patton's attack on his views given in the article, "Liberalism and the Indiviual," in the last issue.

May I suggest that Mr. Patton's article is a good example of the weakness of his own position? As an extreme individualist, he pushes Mr. Schug's statement to an extreme interpretation in order to attack it, an error of judgment which a little of the social cooperation he so despises might have prevented.

There is no individual in the extreme sense of Mr. Patton's position; each individual is a product of innumerable bits of social cooperation which made him possible as a supposedly independent artist or thinker. Moreover, the independent individual exists in his seeming independence precisely because a social group cares enough to cooperate to make possible his independence. Behind Mr. Patton is a religious society which attends his services as individuals, and as part of a larger cooperating whole supports him in his work. Mr. Patton is very well aware that this support is possible only because some men have compromised enough so that it is possible for the society to support his work.

We need to recognize both that there are values which the uncompromising individual can create—if there is sufficient cooperation to make it possible for him to create—and that there are values not less significant which are achieved in the act of cooperation. Frequently enough the genius' value to society is enhanced when he learns the difficult discipline of cooperation for purposes above the mere expression of his own ego. Without the acceptance and fulfillment of this discipline, most great individuals would be no more than Stephen Leacock's man who jumped to horse and "galloped off in all directions."

Cooperation is itself an art, a difficult art, and one which frequently might save the individual from the errors of arrogant solipsism. It is distinguished from Mr. Patton's apparent point of view by a deep-seated respect and reverence for the personality and development of others than ourselves. It avoids the vice of contempt for others which runs through Mr. Patton's article leading him to think in terms of society as composed of a few who are apparently above all law (cf Hitler) and the herdmen who are to be disregarded and despised.

I do not think this is an extreme interpretation of Mr. Patton's article. The note of contempt for the majority, by whose cooperation and support he exists, runs through the article from start to finish. The calm assumption that only the few are capable of intelligent judgment and that anything worthwhile can only come into being through a total disregard of the masses of men is very close to the idea which considers the bulk of humanity as cattle to be slaughtered or driven as strategy may determine for the sake of power, and which, indeed, turns to hatred and suppression, even massacre, of all minorities and individuals that are different. On the small scale, where power is not within the limits of possibility, this type of thinking takes refuge in the claim that its superiority exempts it from the obligations of "the herd" and entitles it to maintenance by that majority which it despises.

The individual *is* important. His differences need to be respected and encouraged, insofar as they are not destructive of the rights of others to the opportunity for development. Yet there comes a time, a situation, in which the individual can only proceed with his idea by the imposition of his will upon others who see things differently from him, if he is not willing to accept the cooperative process. At this point the man who holds his fellowmen in contempt as "the herd" may become a menace so great that he either succeeds in suppression or forces his own suppression through activity which substitutes violence for persuasion as the way ahead.

And in any event his values rest upon a social acceptance and appreciation by some portion of the working social order, which is able to distinguish between, e.g., a Velikovsky and an Einstein, between the fraud and the genuine. In the end there seems no alternative to totalitarian rule except that of a voluntary social cooperation which can be patient and not yield to the temptation to despise those who differ from us, cooperation which accepts the rule of law as the necessary condition of our right and opportunity to work peacefully for revision of the law. The individual is always dependent upon society even in his most impassioned declarations of independence.

Louisville, Kentucky. ROBERT T. WESTON.

The Field

(*Continued from page* 50)

man values.

4. It insists that personal liberty is an end that must be combined with social responsibility in order that it shall not be sacrificed to the improvement of material conditions. Without intellectual liberty the progress of fundamental research, on which progress must in the long run depend, would not be possible. Humanism ventures to build a world on the free person responsible to society. On behalf of individual freedom, Humanism is undogmatic, imposing no creed upon its adherents, thus committing the movement to a program of education free from indoctrination.

5. Humanism is a way of life, aiming at the maximum possible fulfillment through the cultivation of ethical and creative living. It can be a way of life for everyone everywhere if the individual is capable of the responses required by the changing social order. The primary task of Humanism today is to make men aware in the simplest terms of what it can mean to them and what it commits them to. By utilizing for this end, and for purposes of peace, the new power which science has given us, Humanists have confidence that the present crisis can be surmounted. Liberated from fear, the energies of man will be available for a self-realization to which it is impossible to foresee the limit.

Ethical Humanism is thus a faith that answers the challenge of our times. We call upon all men who share this conviction to associate themselves with us in this cause.

Western Unitarian Conference

700 Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago 15, Illinois
RANDALL S. HILTON, Executive Secretary

BOARD MEETING

The Board of Directors of the Western Unitarian Conference met in Chicago, September 29. Reports were received from the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Religious Education Committee, the Geneva Planning Council, the Job Analysis Commission, the Fellowship Advisory Committee, the Committee on the Conference History, the Central Planning Committee, and on the May Meetings of the American Unitarian Association.

Action by the Board approved budgetary increases. It also approved the budget for the 1953 Geneva Conference.

Dr. Thaddeus B. Clark, of St. Louis, was appointed chairman of the Nominating Committee. Other members of the committee are to be chosen by the sub-regions. The Nominating Committee will present names for President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and three Directors. The Board of Directors, sitting as the Nominating Committee for the office of Secretary, nominated Rev. Randall S. Hilton for a three-year term to succeed himself.

The following persons were elected to the Program Committee for the annual meeting to be held in Indianapolis:

E. Burdette Backus, Chairman, All Souls, Indianapolis
John K. Hammon, North Church, Indianapolis
Charles VanDine, Dayton
Ralph Fuchs, Bloomington, Indiana
Elmer W. Pounds, St. Louis
Randall S. Hilton, Chicago, Secretary

The President was empowered to appoint a College Centers Committee on the completion of his study to ascertain the possibility of a College Centers program.

The Secretary was instructed to prepare a bibliography of materials dealing with the proposed Unitarian-Universalist Federal Union. He was also instructed to send a communication to the Conference members on behalf of the Board, urging the placing of *Freedom Moves West,* the Conference history, in their local libraries.

Three new sub-regions of the Western Unitarian Conference were recognized. They are the Ohio Valley Unitarian Conference, the Midwest Council of Religious Liberals (Chicago area), and the Abraham Lincoln Conference.

GENEVA PLANNING COUNCIL

The Planning Council for the Geneva Conference met September 26 and 27. The conference will be held at College Camp, Wisconsin, June 28-July 4, 1953. The following staff members were elected:

Business Manager—Randall S. Hilton
Registrar—Mrs. Bernard Heinrich
Publicity Director—Melvin Mather
Recreation Director—Alfred Henriksen
Junior High Director—Oscar Quimby
Office Manager—Mrs. Carl Schaad

The general program was outlined and various members of the Council were assigned to secure the chosen personnel of the faculty.

Note: Several churches have already begun activities looking forward to sending delegates to Geneva. Early registration is important. Send your registrations to Mrs. Bernard Heinrich, 629 S. Grove, Oak Park, Illinois.

CENTRAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Central Planning Committee met September 30. The committee checked over the final arrangements of the field trip of Mr. Edward Darling, Promotion Director of the Beacon Press, to the various sub-regions of the Conference. There was discussion of problems relating to the strengthening of our churches and fellowships. As an initial move for furthering this study the Secretary was requested to add certain questions dealing with finances to the general information questionnaire sent to the churches this fall. The committee will meet again December 2 to evaluate Mr. Darling's field trip, to analyze the returns on the questionnaire, and to make further plans for this project of strengthening the local organizations.

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST MATERIALS

There has been quite a bit written about the proposed Unitarian-Universalist Federal Union. Some of this material is listed here with notations as to where it can be obtained. Some of it has been in the Minister's Packet.

Every church and fellowship is requested to vote on this proposition. While only the votes of the churches are counted, the attitudes and opinions of the fellowships are important.

1. *The History of Unitarian-Universalist Comity* —Lon Ray Call: (A.U.A., 25 Beacon St., Boston 8).
2. *The Report of the Joint Unitarian-Universalist Commission:* (A.U.A., 25 Beacon St., Boston 8).
3. *Let's Get Acquainted:* (A.U.A., 25 Beacon St., Boston 8).
4. 20 *Questions on Uni-Uni Federal Union:* (A.U.A., 25 Beacon St., Boston 8).
5. *Our Liberal Heritage* — Alfred S. Cole: (A.U.A., 25 Beacon St., Boston 8).
6. *Federal Union,* a symposium: *The Christian Leader,* September, 1952, (108 Massachusetts Ave., Boston 15).
7. *Federal Union and Historical Liberalism*—Fred B. Perkins: *The Christian Leader,* October, 1952, (108 Massachusetts Ave., Boston 15).
8. *Liberals Can Be Compatible*—George N. Marshall: *Christian Register,* September, 1952, (25 Beacon Street, Boston 8).
9. *Federal Union on the Way*—Frederick May Eliot: *Christian Register,* July, 1952, (25 Beacon Street, Boston 8).
10. *Uni-Uni Union, Pro and Con*—Leslie Pennington and Arthur Graham: *Christian Register,* May, 1952, (25 Beacon Street, Boston 8).
11. *Should Unitarians and Universalists Unite?*—Gerald F. Weary: *Christian Register,* March, 1950, (25 Beacon Street, Boston 8).
12. *Unitarian-Universalist Federal Union,* two statements by Payson Miller: Minister's Packet, (25 Beacon Street, Boston 8).

These references include articles both pro and con, although principally pro. A new pamphlet is expected soon which will give some of the objections and the Joint Commission's answers. Watch for it.

AREA MEETINGS

Abraham Lincoln Area. The Abraham Lincoln Area met at Quincy, Illinois, October 17-18. Dr. Charles H. Lyttle, author of *Freedom Moves West,* was the keynote speaker. Mr. Edward Darling conducted a publicity workshop and spoke at the Saturday luncheon. There were workshops also on religious education and church extension and integration.

Iowa-Nebraska Area. The 75th Anniversary of both the Iowa Unitarian Association and the Des Moines Unitarian Church was celebrated October 24-26. Dr. Curtis W. Reese, President of the Western Unitarian Conference and a former minister at Des Moines, gave the anniversary sermon on Sunday. Randall S. Hilton gave the banquet address Saturday evening. Edward Darling spoke at the Saturday luncheon. The meetings opened Friday night with the Judy Lecture given by Dr. Samuel N. Stevens, President of Grinnell College.

The Missouri Valley Youth met simultaneously with the Association.

Michigan Area. Grosse Pointe was the setting for the Michigan Area Unitarian Conference October 24-25. "Pioneering in Religion for Our Time" was the theme. Rev. Kenneth L. Patton, minister of the Charles Street Meeting House, Boston, was the principal speaker. Mr. Patton spoke about and illustrated the experiments in symbolism and worship being undertaken by the Charles Street Church. He gave three addresses on the following subjects: "Recovering the Past," "Science and Belief," and "Worship for a World Religion." A special workshop on publicity was held in Detroit on November 3.

Ohio Valley Area. The Ohio Valley Unitarian Conference met at the First Unitarian Church in Cincinnati November 1-2. The First Church of Louisville presented a panel on "Meeting the Needs of More Children and a Better Religious Education." The St. John's Unitarian Church of Cincinnati presented a panel on "Meeting the Needs of More Unitarians for a Broader Program of Activities." The Conference also visited the new building of the St. John's Unitarian Church. The Conference concluded with a dinner Sunday with Randall S. Hilton as speaker.

Chicago Area. The Midwest Council of Religious Liberals, the Chicago area conference of Unitarians and Universalists, met September 13 for a workshop on fund raising with Mr. O. T. Gilmore, Director of the United Unitarian Appeal. On November 2 they met again for a workshop on public relations with Edward Darling.

Colorado. Representatives of the four Unitarian organizations in Colorado met on November 16 with Randall S. Hilton, Conference Secretary, to plan the setting up of an area organization.

NEW MINISTERS

Ft. Wayne. John Fordon, graduate of Starr King School for the Ministry, began his ministry in Ft. Wayne, September 1. During the summer he preached at the Unitarian Church in Urbana, Illinois. Mr. Fordon comes from Chicago and is a graduate of the University of Illinois.

Davenport. Thomas Maloney, a graduate of Harvard Divinity School, became the minister at Davenport on October 12. While at Harvard he served as an assistant at the Unitarian Church of Wellesley Hills. Prior to going to Harvard, he was an officer of the Unitarian Fellowship in Boulder, Colorado, attending the university there at the same time.

Lincoln. Rev. Isaiah Domas, minister of the Unitarian Church in Erie, Pennsylvania, for the past three years, has been called to the Unitarian Church of Lincoln, Nebraska. He will begin his work there on January 1.

NEWS NOTES

Edward Darling. The Promotion and Sales Manager of the Beacon Press and Publicity Director for the American Unitarian Association, Mr. Edward Darling, besides visiting the various area conferences mentioned above, also visited all the Unitarian churches in the Iowa Unitarian Association and the Unitarian churches in St. Louis, Missouri; Madison, Wisconsin; South Bend, Indiana; and Detroit, Michigan.

Area Appeal Chairmen. Each sub-regional area has a chairman for the United Unitarian Appeal. The chairmen for areas are as follows:

Abraham Lincoln Conference—
Mr. H. Hadley Grimm,
8150 Gannon
University City, Missouri

Iowa Unitarian Association—
Mr. Frank Schramm
c/o J. S. Schramm Company
Burlington, Iowa

Minnesota Conference—
Rev. Arthur Foote
739 Portland Avenue
St. Paul 5, Minnesota

Michigan Area Conference—
Mr. Harry M. C. Howes
8136 Greenlawn
Detroit 4, Michigan

Midwest Council (Chicago Area)—
Rev. E. T. Buehrer
301 N. Mayfield Avenue
Chicago 44, Illinois

Ohio Valley Conference—
Mr. James H. Percival
13 Edith Street
Newtown, Ohio

These persons are willing to give any assistance possible to the churches and fellowships in their areas. Feel free to call upon them and also to call upon the Conference Office. The Appeal record for each of the areas was printed in the last issue of UNITY. There is room for improvement, and with these chairmen the improvement should be achieved.

National Conferences. The Unitarian and Universalist Young People will hold their joint convention next summer. It will be held the week preceding the Geneva Assembly. Among other things they will take action on a constitution merging the two organizations. The National Leadership Training Institute of the General Alliance will also be held within the boundaries of the Western Conference next July. Watch for definite announcements of these meetings.

Prairie Group. The Prairie Group, an organization of Unitarian ministers devoted to the serious study of important problems, met at Marquette State Park, Grafton, Illinois, November 10-12.